

# **LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & FISHERIES**



**OFFICE OF FISHERIES  
INLAND FISH SECTION**

**PART VI-A**

**WATERBODY MANAGEMENT PLAN SERIES**

**LAKE CLAIBORNE**

**LAKE HISTORY & MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

# **CHRONOLOGY**

DOCUMENT SCHEDULED TO BE UPDATED ANNUALLY

December 2012—Prepared By:  
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## **Lake History**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Parish / Location:

Claiborne Parish – near the town of Homer

Date Lake Formed:

Project completed and gates closed in the fall of 1966. Lake reached pool stage on May 17, 1968.

Impoundment:

Impoundment of Bayou D'Arbonne in 1966.

Size (surface area):

6,400 acres at normal pool stage, normal seasonal water level fluctuations do not produce significant changes in surface acreage due to shoreline contours.

Watershed:

133 square miles of area (85,120 acres) drain into Lake Claiborne. The ratio of watershed to lake surface area is 13.3:1.

Pool Stage:

Surface elevation of Lake Claiborne is set at the spillway elevation of 185 MSL (mean sea level).

Spillway Width:

Spillway is a concrete circular drop inlet, 62 feet in diameter at top (200 feet crest length); opening at bottom 30 feet diameter. Spillway crest is set at 185 MSL. Three 9.5' x 14' concrete outlet conduits. The spillway is pictured in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Concrete circular drop inlet spillway at Lake Claiborne, LA.

Drawdown (outlet) Structure Description:

The drawdown structure has two 8' x 8' sluice gates with an invert elevation of 151.2 MSL.

Who Controls:

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) are responsible for operation and maintenance of the dam and control structure on Lake Claiborne. The Claiborne Parish Watershed District Commission (CPWDC) is responsible for the maintenance of Lake Claiborne for the purpose of conserving the soil and water and developing the natural resources of the district. Drawdown requests from lake commission require LDWF approval prior to DOTD opening the control structure. Drawdown recommendations by LDWF are presented to the lake commission for approval prior to implementation. Any request for opening the control structure must be directed to the Secretary of DOTD in writing from the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries or his designee.

## LAKE AUTHORITY

### Association:

Claiborne Parish Watershed District

### Authorization:

Created in 1966 by R.S. 38:2861 through 38:2878 as a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana. See [Appendix I](#).

### Board of Commissioners – Claiborne Parish Watershed District

Members of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District Board of Commissioners are appointed by the Claiborne Parish Police Jury.

### Claiborne Parish Watershed District Board of Commissioners

Robert R. Haynes – Chairman

Chic Hines

Wayne Kilpatrick

Phillip E. Fincher

Britt Synco

Harry Dansby

Jerry Whitton

Creation / Nomination – The Claiborne Parish Watershed District Commission (CPWDC) was created by state statute. Members are appointed by the Claiborne Parish Police Jury.

Website - <http://www.cpwater.org/>

Claiborne Parish Watershed District Commission

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 266

Homer, LA 71040

Physical Address: 507 W. Main

Homer, LA 71040

(Police Jury Office Complex, Courthouse Square, Homer)

Clerk - 318-927-5161 – Phone calls are answered M-F 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Call to request a visit with a member of the commission.

e-mail - [cpwatershed@yahoo.com](mailto:cpwatershed@yahoo.com)

## ACCESS

### Boat Ramps:

There are two public boat launching facilities available for use at Lake Claiborne. Use is free of charge. Each of these areas has boat mooring facilities adjacent to the ramp. Lake Claiborne State Park has two ramps within the park, one of these ramps is reserved for registered campers, and the other is open to the public for a nominal launch fee. Each of these ramps has boat mooring facilities adjacent to the ramp. Restrooms, a swimming area, a seasonal concession stand, picnic tables, a fish cleaning station and playgrounds areas are located in the vicinity of the ramps within the state park. Three private commercial marinas offer boat launching for a nominal fee as well. The names of the facilities, physical descriptions and geo-referenced locations are found in Table 1 below.

Table 1. – Locations and descriptions of Lake Claiborne, Louisiana public boat ramps.

<b>Ramp</b>	<b>Coordinates NAD 83</b>	<b>Ramp</b>	<b>Parking</b>
Arizona Landing (Public)	N 32.734361 W 92.93775	Concrete	Gravel – 30 Trailers
Lake Claiborne State Park (Pay to launch)	N 32.727778 W 92.915944	Concrete	Blacktop – 44 Trailers
Lake Claiborne State Park Campground Ramp (Registered Campers Only)	N32.732583 W 92.918139	Concrete	Gravel / Dirt – 20 Trailers
Lisbon Landing	N 32.799 W 93.001528	Concrete	Blacktop – 60 Trailers
Parden's Paradise (Pay to launch)	N 32.724278 W 92.951194	Concrete	Gravel – 25 Trailers
Pleasure Point (Pay to launch)	N 32.737472 W 92.944611	Concrete	Gravel – 30 Trailers
Port Au Prince (Pay to launch)	N 32.7250 W 92.956139	Concrete	Gravel – 30 Trailers

See [Appendix II](#) - “Lake Claiborne Public Boat Ramps” for mapped locations of ramps.

### Piers:

There is a boat mooring pier at the Arizona Landing that can also be utilized for fishing access. There are boat mooring piers at the two boat ramps at Lake Claiborne State Park that can also be used for fishing. There is also a foot bridge across the back end of a cove at the Lake Claiborne State Park, and several small mooring piers in the camping area that can be used for fishing. Lisbon Landing has a boat mooring pier that also offers limited fishing access. There are boat mooring piers available at Pleasure Point Marina and Parden's Paradise Marina.



State / Federal Facilities:

Lake Claiborne State Park

225 State Park Road

Homer, LA 71040

318-927-2976 or 888-677-2524 (toll free)

For reservations call 1-877-CAMP-N-LA (877-226-7652) toll free.

Email: [lakeclaiborne@crt.la.gov](mailto:lakeclaiborne@crt.la.gov)

Website: <http://www.crt.state.la.us/parks/ilakeclai.aspx>

Lake Claiborne State Park is a 643 acre site located approximately 11 miles southeast of Homer, off LA Hwy 146. The property lies on the southern shoreline of the lake near the dam (Figure 2). The park was opened in 1974 and offers boat launching, boat mooring facilities, bank fishing, camping areas, cabin rentals, boat and canoe rentals, a swimming area, nature trails, and picnic areas.

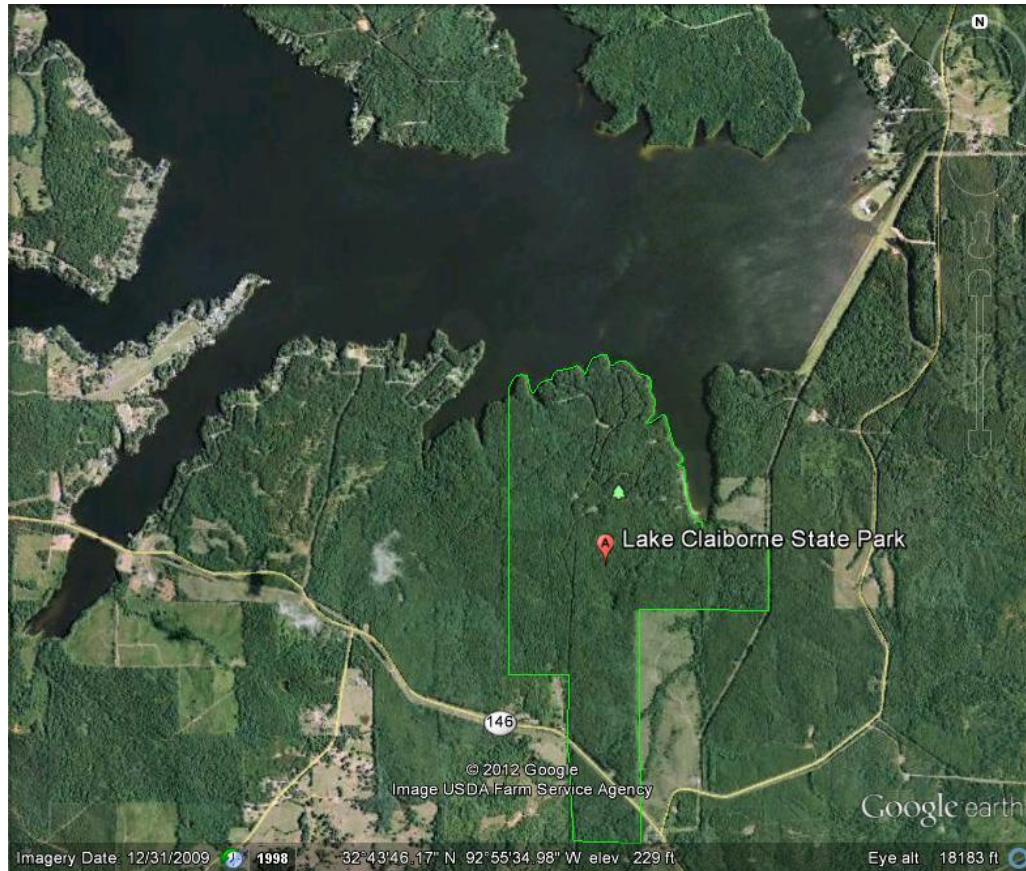


Figure 2. Lake Claiborne State Park is a 643 acre park located on the southern shoreline of Lake Claiborne, approximately 11 miles southeast of Homer, LA.

Artificial Reefs:

Two artificial reefs were constructed and placed in Lake Claiborne during January of 2003 in a cooperative project by the CPWDC and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. The reefs are located on the south shore of Lake Claiborne

adjacent to the Lake Claiborne State Park (Figure 3). The reefs are accessible to shoreline anglers as well as those fishing from boats. The reefs are in water depth ranging from 18' to 25' in depth.



Figure 3. Locations of artificial reefs in Lake Claiborne, LA. Reefs were placed in close proximity to the shoreline at Lake Claiborne State Park in order to make them accessible to bank fishermen.

Each reef consists of approximately fifty 10' tall tree type structures. Structures utilize polyethylene feed pallets donated by the Cargill Animal Nutrition Inc., Nutrena Feed Mill in Lecompte, Louisiana, placed on a plastic (PVC) pipe stem (Figure 4). This type of structure provides complex cover for forage fish and ambush points for predatory fish. All materials used in the construction of the reefs were approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.





Figure 4. Artificial reef materials being deployed during January 2003, in Lake Claiborne, LA, to enhance fishing opportunities by providing complex cover for forage fish and structure for sport fish.

Each reef was marked with buoys to enable anglers to easily locate them (Figure 5). The GPS coordinates for each reef location are listed in Table 2 below.



Figure 5. Buoys being placed during January 2003, in Lake Claiborne, LA to enable anglers to easily locate the artificial reefs placed to enhance fishing opportunities.

Table 2. Coordinates for artificial reef locations in Lake Claiborne, LA.

Name	Material	Coordinates NAD 83	
Lake Claiborne Artificial Reef #1	Polyethylene pallets	32.734203 N	-92.920961 W
Lake Claiborne Artificial Reef #2	Polyethylene pallets	32.714842 N	-92.917461 W

## SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT

The shoreline of Lake Claiborne is extensively developed. Approximately 75% of the 57 mile shoreline includes approximately 1400 residential properties. Development along the shoreline consists primarily of nice homes and camps, with some areas having more modest developments. Vegetation surrounding the lake consists primarily of mixed pine hardwood forests with occasional improved pastures and bottom land hardwoods in the creek drainages.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF LAKE

Shoreline Length: Approximately 57 Miles

Timber Type: Prior to impoundment Lake Claiborne was bottomland hardwoods in the lower areas and mixed pine / hardwoods in the higher elevations. Scattered cypress could be found along the creek bottoms.

Average Depth: 15.8 feet at normal pool stage

Maximum Depth: 35 Feet

Total Water Volume at Pool Stage: 99,500 acre feet

Natural Seasonal Water Fluctuation: 2-3 feet

## EVENTS/ PROBLEMS

### Navigation Hazards / Channel Marking

Stumps constitute a major navigation hazard in many parts of the lake. Most areas which have not been cleared are difficult to navigate by boat without encountering numerous stumps. During construction, approximately 2000 acres was cleared in the lower lake near the dam site. In addition, a 400 foot wide boat road was cleared up the main channel of Bayou D'Arbonne to provide boating access to the upper end of

the lake. Several smaller lateral boat roads were also cleared to provide access to other parts of the lake.

The CPWDC has marked the main channels and ski areas with buoys for a number of years. The buoys often drifted off course causing problems with navigation. A channel marking project was completed in 2010 on Lake Claiborne. This project entailed installation of 197 permanent channel markers with signage that complies with the United States Coastguard Inland Water Regulations. This project was a cooperative endeavor between LDWF and the CPWDC. These permanent channel markers will direct boaters to safe boating waters and away from hazardous areas. The newly installed channel markers will be especially useful to new and casual users of Lake Claiborne.

### Flooding

Heavy rains in April of 1991 caused severe flooding around Lake Claiborne. Over 200 homes were flooded following a 12 inch rainfall. The lake was 7.2' above normal pool elevation and approximately six inches above the 100 year flood elevation. Another major high water event in 1996 flooded numerous homes around the lake. The CPWDC subsequently initiated efforts to decrease the flooding potential of homes around Lake Claiborne.

A study proposal was initiated in 1997 by Dr. Frank Pezold at NLU and Dr. Cynthia Kittler at GSU to determine if drawdowns to two feet below normal pool stage would increase the productivity of Lake Claiborne. The initial study was funded by the CPWDC as they were interested in the flood control aspect of the project. Additional funding was never secured and the study was not conducted.

In 1998, LDWF received a request from the CPWDC to hold the lake level at 18" below normal pool stage during December, January and February for flood control purposes. LDWF informed the lake commission that we did not have the expertise to advise on flood control measures, but benefits to the fisheries habitats and fish population could be achieved by dewatering the lake in the late fall and maintaining this condition until the next spring rise. The concept of dewatering the lake to a level which would allow next spring's surcharge to be retained was offered for consideration.

At the request of the CPWDC the "Lake Claiborne Surcharge Reduction Preliminary Feasibility Study" was prepared by DOTD. The task presented to DOTD was to limit the lake surcharge elevation to two feet for a 100 year storm. Various combinations of additional uncontrolled ogee spillway lengths and / or multiple gate conduits were analyzed using sophisticated computer models. It was determined that it was theoretically possible to limit the surcharge to two feet during a 100 year storm using several different gated conduit and spillway length combinations. The addition of 1,000 feet of ogee spillway and twelve 8' x 8' gates was determined to be the most cost effective in 1998. Estimated cost was \$15,000,000. Additional modifications raising the elevation of Hwy 518 and a new concrete bridge over Bayou D'Arbonne

would be necessary if any of the plans were implemented. Estimated cost for the modification to Hwy 518 was \$5,000,000 in 1998. Decreasing the surcharge height of Lake Claiborne would also increase downstream flooding and cause problems on Lake D'Arbonne. No modifications have been made to the existing spillway design as of August 2012.

Downstream flooding has been a problem during fall drawdowns in the past. Landowners have complained that a typical post Labor Day start date for drawdowns flood prime hunting property. Requests have been made for initiation of the drawdown to be as early as August with a reduced dewatering rate. The change could decrease downstream flooding during a drawdown.

### Drawdowns

Lake Claiborne has undergone numerous drawdowns since it was impounded in 1966. The frequent drawdowns have made it difficult to determine the effect of drawdowns on the fisheries. All drawdowns of record were conducted at the request of the CPWDC for shoreline maintenance purposes. Often these drawdowns would be requested only a couple of years or less following the preceding drawdown. In 1998, the CPWDC requested a drawdown for shoreline repairs following a windstorm. The lake had undergone a drawdown only 2 years prior. The proposal was controversial due to the perception that the action was being considered for only a few property owners. Public opposition was so great that the Claiborne Parish Police Jury passed a resolution asking the CPWDC to reconsider the drawdown. A public meeting was held and several hundred people showed up in opposition to the drawdown. The CPWDC President and several other members of the lake commission resigned due to the controversy.

In order to avoid similar problems in the future, the CPWDC decided to have regularly scheduled drawdowns on Lake Claiborne. Initially a fall / winter drawdown of every eight years was scheduled. The schedule was later adjusted to a frequency of six years. The plan to have regularly scheduled drawdowns allows shoreline property owners to perform routine maintenance on their property and gives sufficient time between drawdowns that other users of the lake are not unduly inconvenienced. The first of these regularly scheduled drawdowns began in September of 2011 and extended through January 2012.

### Striped Bass and Hybrid Striped Bass

Striped bass (*Morone chrysops*) and hybrid striped bass (*Morone saxatilis* x *M. chrysops*) have been stocked in Lake Claiborne as a supplemental sport fish and as a fisheries management tool (to control gizzard shad and bluegill). In the mid 1980's, rumors began to circulate that these fish were responsible for the decline of other sport fish in the lake, particularly largemouth bass. Anecdotal accounts of striped bass feeding on largemouth bass were common. The rumors coincided with timing of the typical decline in post impoundment productivity. Perceptive fishermen noted the decline in sport fish productivity, but incorrectly assigned responsibility to the

introduced striped bass. The less obvious process associated with aging reservoirs was largely ignored.

Note: The stocking of striped bass into Lake Claiborne was discontinued in 1982. Instead of striped bass, hybrid striped bass have been stocked since that time.

The food habits of striped bass (n=77) collected with gill nets during December 1981 through February 1982 were studied to determine the primary diet of these fish. During this analysis of striped bass stomachs, 65 of 77 contained food items and 12 were empty. Through volumetric analysis, it was determined that shad (*Dorosoma spp.*) accounted for 94.3% of the striped bass diet. Unidentified fish remains comprised 5.4%, sunfish (*Lepomis spp.*) comprised 0.2%, and 0.1% of the total volume was detritus and insect larvae. The stomachs of 27 hybrid striped bass were also examined during this same time period. Twenty-three of these stomachs contained food and 4 were empty. Shad (*Dorosoma spp.*) accounted for 44.9% of the food volume, insect larvae 31.0%, sunfish (*Lepomis spp.*) 13.9%, fish remains 6.2%, detritus 4.0%, and *Daphnia spp.* accounted for trace amounts.

Persons opposed to the stocking of striped bass and hybrid striped bass wrote letters over a period of several years and circulated a petition which reportedly documented the opposition of 2,000 people to the stocking of these fish in Lake Claiborne. These people claimed that the striped bass and hybrid striped bass were detrimental to the recreational fisheries in Lake Claiborne and to the largemouth bass population in particular. In 1996, the CPWDC passed a resolution expressly prohibiting stocking stripers and / or hybrid stripers into Lake Claiborne. The resolution further stated that “*Anything that is stocked in Lake Claiborne, whether plant or animal, shall be first approved by the Commission.*” After concern was expressed by the public in 1997, the resolution was repealed by the CPWDC. Concurrently, the CPWDC commission also passed a resolution granting LDWF authority to act on behalf of the Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission regarding Lake Claiborne.

The hybrid striped bass fishery in Lake Claiborne has attracted a large and dedicated following of anglers that enjoy fishing for these species. There was much concern by this group that stocking of hybrid striped bass may discontinued due to the pressure from largemouth bass fishermen. Through a coincidental, but unrelated series of events a decline in hybrid striped bass abundance did occur. Stockings conducted in 1993, 1995, and 1996 were largely unsuccessful because hybrid striped bass were stocked as fry, instead of the larger fingerling size. Fry stocking was conducted after verbal indication from Texas Parks and Wildlife staff that their experiences were successful. At that time LDWF hatchery pond space was severely limited. The appeal of successful stocking without need for rearing to fingerling size in hatchery ponds was compelling to LWDF.

Hybrid striped bass enthusiasts noticed the decline in the fishery, expressed their concern, and requested that the stocking be continued. LDWF gill net sampling, conducted during the winter of 1997 – 1998 indicated low abundance of hybrid stripers. Additionally, all hybrid striped bass samples were large, measuring from

22" to 25" in total length (TL). The findings were reported to the CPWDC in January, 1998. The lake commission responded with a request to resume stocking of hybrid striped bass in Lake Claiborne.

In an effort to increase the Lake Claiborne hybrid a cooperative project with International Paper Company resulted in the stocking of advanced fingerlings for 4 successive years beginning in 1999. The introduction of these larger fish coupled with the stocking of fingerling size fish produced a noticeable improvement in the hybrid striper fishery.

### Carp

In the early 1970's, Lake Claiborne common carp were found to be increasing in abundance. Correspondence indicates that trammel net samples conducted in 1970 reflect increasing numbers of common carp and spotted suckers. Public concern over the overabundance of carp grew to the point that several agencies, organizations and elected officials became involved. The town of Homer, the Claiborne Parish Police Jury, Claiborne Parish Hunting and Fishing Club, Claiborne Parish Cattlemen's Association, and the Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission passed resolutions concerning the carp issue. Representative Louise Johnson wrote a letter requesting assistance from LDWF for problems including crappie not reproducing, stunted bluegill, and the overabundance of carp.

In response to the concerns, LDWF examined two different options for rough fish removal from Lake Claiborne. One option was a complete eradication of the fish in Lake Claiborne. This measure was too drastic to merit serious consideration as rotenone for a project that size was cost prohibitive. Additionally, the fact that Lake Claiborne already had a good sport fish population also meant that recovery time through restocking efforts was not an option. The other option was to open the lake to limited commercial fishing. This was the only feasible means to reduce the carp population in the lake and commercial fishing was the best option. In 1973, the Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission opened the lake to commercial fishing in an effort to reduce the carp population.



## MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### AQUATIC VEGETATION

Lake Claiborne has had very little problems with aquatic vegetation over the years. The lake sustains healthy levels of submerged vegetation comprised primarily of native vegetation. Occasional complaints are received from shoreline property owners, who reside in the backs of coves or other shallow areas, but in general no plant problem has threatened the overall health of and access to the lake. However, in 2007 giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) was discovered in the lake. Giant salvinia has covered up to 25 surface acres at times in Lake Claiborne. Most of the infestations are on the upper end of the lake near the Hwy. 2 boat ramp. Giant salvinia was severely impacted during the winters of 2009 and 2010 by the unusually hard freezes throughout the northern part of the state and coverage has been greatly reduced.

Shallow water in the area of the salvinia infestation makes herbicide applications difficult. Salvinia has spread through a set of culverts under Hwy. 2 and into a nearby ditch and borrow pit which cannot be accessed by conventional spray herbicide applications. Pirogues and backpack sprayers have been used in this area.

Historic aquatic plant control efforts have been primarily foliar herbicide applications for emergent vegetation at the request of shoreline property owners on the upper end of the lake or in the backs of shallow coves.

Recent aquatic plant control measures have included ongoing foliar herbicide applications for giant salvinia along with limited foliar herbicide applications for emergent vegetation along the inhabited shoreline areas.

#### Aquatic Vegetation Surveys and Type Maps:

Field checks for assessment of the aquatic vegetation on Lake Claiborne were conducted annually by the Aquatic Plant Control Section from 1980-1984, and 1988-2001. Vegetation type map surveys were performed in conjunction with these vegetation assessments except for the years when the lake was undergoing a drawdown and accurate information could not be obtained.

Lake Claiborne typically has aquatic vegetation coverage of less than 10% and the coverage is typically less than 5% for a year or two following a drawdown. There was very little change in the major vegetation communities during the years for which type map surveys were performed. A representative sample of aquatic vegetation type maps for Lake Claiborne is contained in [Appendix III](#). Type map surveys on Lake Claiborne have not been conducted in recent years until the introduction of giant salvinia in 2007.

#### Aquatic Vegetation Treatment History:

Foliar herbicide applications by LDWF spray crews for floating and emergent aquatic vegetation have been ongoing for many years on Lake Claiborne. Prior to the 2007 discovery of giant salvinia on Lake Claiborne, most applications were small in scale and made to benefit a few shoreline property owners. Table 3 lists the acres treated from 2005 through mid-June of 2012.

Table 3. – Herbicide applications from 2005 through June 13, 2012.

<b>Treatment Year</b>	<b>Acres Treated</b>
2005	9
2006	30
2007	50
2008	140
2009	314
2010	71
2011	11
Through August 21, 2012	75

## **HISTORY OF REGULATIONS**

### Recreational

Statewide regulations have been in effect for all species since impoundment.

Recreational fishing regulations for 2012 may be viewed at the link below:

[http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31743-recreational-fishing-regulations/2012\\_fishing\\_regulations.pdf](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31743-recreational-fishing-regulations/2012_fishing_regulations.pdf)

### Commercial

Lake Claiborne does not support a large commercial fishery. The primary commercial species are channel catfish, blue catfish, and flathead catfish. These species are also sought by recreational fishermen.

The use of gill, trammel and flag nets was prohibited in Lake Claiborne in June, 1982 by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission.

Correspondence on file from 1993 indicates that despite large numbers of channel catfish being stocked by the Claiborne Parish Watershed District Commission and LDWF, follow-up fish sampling indicated that natural reproduction does not occur. In 1991, commercial fishermen utilizing slat traps and small hoop nets were

harvesting significant numbers of channel catfish. Recreational use of slat traps and hoop nets increased after fishermen saw the success of commercial fishermen. Concern was expressed by the lake commission that the channel catfish were being harvested at a faster rate than the fingerlings could be purchased for restocking. The CPWDC does not feel like it should be purchasing fingerlings for a put and take commercial fishery.

In 2004, Act 541 authorized the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to regulate, restrict or prohibit the recreational or commercial use of hoop nets, gill nets, trammel nets, strike nets, seines, wire nets, slat traps, and wire traps on Lake Claiborne (see RS 38:2874 in Appendix I). This legislation was passed in response to concerns over commercial activity on Lake Claiborne. Lake Claiborne regulations have not been changed since this legislation was passed. No gear restrictions have been enacted since entanglement gear was prohibited in 1982.

Current Commercial Regulations:

State regulations apply except that the use of gill nets, trammel nets and fish seines are prohibited in Lake Claiborne.

The 2012 statewide commercial fishing regulations may be viewed at:

[http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31745-commercial-fishing-regulations/2012\\_commercial\\_fishing.pdf](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31745-commercial-fishing-regulations/2012_commercial_fishing.pdf)

## **DRAWDOWN HISTORY**

Lake Claiborne has been drawn down numerous times since impoundment in 1966. Most of the drawdowns on Lake Claiborne have been at the request of the CPWDC to allow for shoreline maintenance and for lake improvements such as channel marking. These drawdowns have also been beneficial in improving and maintaining fisheries habitats and provide vegetation control as well. Dates, elevation below pool, purpose of these drawdowns, results of the drawdown and any associated issues are reported in Table 4.

Table 4. Drawdown history of Lake Claiborne, LA from 1971 to 2011.

Year	Date(s)	Depth Below Pool	Purpose
1971	8/2 – 10/15	5 Feet	Bank stabilization, erosion control and shoreline improvements
1973	Unknown	8 Feet	Unknown
1975	8/1 – 1/10	8 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and improvements
1980	8/15 – 1/1	8 Feet (target depth) – actual depth in excess of 12 feet	Shoreline repair and improvements following high winds and water levels the preceding winter. (Broken pin on control structure caused level to drop to 12 feet below normal pool before repair. Lake level dropped further due to drought. Returned to pool 12/16/1982.)
1982	Unknown	5 Feet	Shoreline repair, decrease tannic acid from decaying timber. (information from Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission)
1987	Unknown	5 – 6 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and repair. Bids on repairs to control structure and levee. Secondary purpose – control infestation of slender naiad.
1990	9/5 – 12/30	4 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and repair.
1991	9/3 – 1/1	4 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and repair following high winds and water levels.
1996	9/3 – Unknown	5 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and repairs.
1999	9/7 – 1/17	3 – 4 Feet	Expose stumps for placement of navigation buoys.
2004	9/4 – 1/7	7 Feet (target depth) Inadvertently dewatered over 9 feet.	Shoreline maintenance and repairs.
2007	9/17 – 12/2007	3 Feet	Expose stumps and obtain GPS coordinates for placing pilings for navigational purposes
2011	9/6 – 1/2012	7 Feet	Shoreline maintenance and repair. Inspection of dam and control structure, and maintenance work to culverts under Hwy. 2. Both gates fully closed on 9/25/11. Lake began slowly refilling in January 2012; reached pool stage 3/21/2012.

## **FISH KILLS/ DISEASE HISTORY, LMBV**

No fish kills have occurred where Largemouth Bass Virus is suspected to be a factor.

In November of 1981, it was reported to LDWF that several hundred striped bass were dead and dying on the lower end of the lake. On November 17, 1981, personnel from the Inland Fisheries Division of LDWF observed approximately 300 striped bass that were either dead or dying and displaying a loss of equilibrium. These fish ranged in size from 10.6" to 31" TL and were observed in the lower end of the lake from Arizona Road south to the dam.

LDWF set gill nets in order to obtain samples of the striped bass for pathological analysis. The striped bass were examined by an LDWF Fisheries Biologist. The fish had sores and apparent weight loss and displayed an external fungus, yellow grubs were found on the gills of several fish and a heavy infestation of *Epistylis* was found on the red areas of the skin. The necropsy report indicates that the liver, eyes, and general condition of the fish indicated starving fish. No internal parasites were found during the examination. The LDWF personnel collecting the fish noted that the fish were scarcely entangled in the webbing with little evidence of struggle.

Several fish were shipped to Auburn University for analysis by fish disease experts associated with the Southeastern Cooperative Fish Disease Project. The pathology report indicated that *Aeromonas hydrophila* was isolated from most of the skin lesions on the striped bass and that *Epistylis spp.* was heavy on the body surface. The pathologist also provided the following comment "Due to the poor condition of the fish it is doubtful if the entire problem is related to the bacterial and parasitic infections. Most likely the basic cause of the mortality was related to some environmental problem."

Sampling for Largemouth Bass Virus has not been conducted on Lake Claiborne.

## **CONTAMINANTS/POLLUTION**

No fish consumption advisories are in effect for Lake Claiborne.

## BIOLOGICAL

### Fish Sampling History:

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has conducted fisheries sampling on Lake Claiborne since impoundment. The fish sampling history from 1970 to 2011 is listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Fish samples taken on Lake Claiborne, LA from 1970 to 2011.

<b>LAKE CLAIBORNE FISH SAMPLING</b>	
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>GEAR</b>
1970	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets 10 – 300' Trammel Net Sets – (unknown mesh size)
1973	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1976	6 – 300' Trammel Net Sets – 1.5" Bar
1977	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1982	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1982 -1983	Gill Nets: 23 Total Sets Including: 300' Gill Net Sets – 3" Bar 300' Gill Net Sets – 3.5" Bar 300' Gill Net Sets – 4" Bar
1986	4 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1986 – 1987	Gill Nets: 33 – 300' Gill Net Sets – 3" Bar 33 – 300' Gill Net Sets – 3.5" Bar 33 – 300' Gill Net Sets – 4" Bar
1987	4 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1988	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets
1989	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets Electrofishing – 180 minutes of sampling – Spring Electrofishing – 120 minutes of sampling – Fall Gill Nets: 8 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 8 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 8 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
1990	2 – One Acre Rotenone Sets Electrofishing – 98 minutes of sampling – Spring Electrofishing – 101 minutes of sampling – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall 6 – 25' Seine, ¼ inch bar, 1 Quadrant Sets
1992	2 – One Acre Rotenone Sets Electrofishing – 93 minutes of sampling - Spring Electrofishing – 94 minutes of sampling – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall

1993	Electrofishing – 95 minutes of sampling – Spring Electrofishing – 111 minutes of sampling – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall
1994	1 – One Acre Rotenone Set Electrofishing – 121 minutes of sampling – Spring Electrofishing – 85 minutes of sampling – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample - Fall
1995	Electrofishing – 96 minutes of sampling – Spring Electrofishing – 106 minutes of sampling – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
1996	Electrofishing – 130 minutes of sampling – Spring
1997	Electrofishing 5 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
1998	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 4 – 15 minute samples – Fall
2000	3 – One Acre Rotenone Sets Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono 6 – 25' Seine, ¼ inch bar, 1 Quadrant Sets
2001	6 – 25' Seine, ¼ inch bar, 1 Quadrant Sets
2002	Gill Nets: 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2003	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets:

	6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2004	Gill Nets: 8 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 8 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2005	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono 6 – 25' Seine, ¼ inch bar, 1 Quadrant Sets
2006	Gill Nets: 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono 6 – 25' Seine, ¼ inch bar, 1 Quadrant Sets
2007	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Gill Nets: 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 2 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2008	Gill Nets: 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 4 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2010	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 2.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 3.5" Bar, Mono 6 – 300' Gill Nets Sets – 4" Bar, Mono
2011	No sampling planned
2012	No sampling planned
2013	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Spring



	Electrofishing 6 – 15 minute samples – Fall 15 minute Electrofishing Forage Sample – Fall Gill Nets: 6 – 300’ Gill Nets Sets – 2.5” Bar, Mono 6 – 300’ Gill Nets Sets – 3” Bar, Mono 6 – 300’ Gill Nets Sets – 3.5” Bar, Mono 6 – 300’ Gill Nets Sets – 4” Bar, Mono
2014	No sampling planned
2015	No sampling planned

#### Lake Records:

There are no records kept specifically for Lake Claiborne. For more information on state records, visit:

<http://www.laoutdoorwriters.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=raz4WbMqdQY=&tabid=87>

#### Stocking History:

Lake Claiborne was originally stocked with largemouth bass, channel catfish, bluegill and black crappie. Numbers and species of fish stocked from 1967 to 2011 are listed in Table 6. A small number of striped bass and walleye fingerlings were also stocked shortly after impoundment in an effort to develop additional sport fishing opportunities in the reservoir. Neither striped bass nor walleye established self-sustaining populations in Lake Claiborne. Walleye stockings were discontinued and striped bass stockings continued. A total of 577,992 striped bass fingerlings were stocked from 1975 to 1985. In 1985, hybrid striped bass were introduced to Lake Claiborne. Hybrid striped bass stockings replaced striped bass stockings in subsequent years. Hybrid striped bass are better suited to the warmer water temperatures typically found in smaller impoundments. From 1993 to 1996, hybrid striped bass fry were stocked instead of fingerling size. The fry did not recruit to the adult population. Fingerling stockings resumed in 1999 along with phase II hybrid striped bass fingerlings as part of a cooperative endeavor with International Paper Company.

Channel catfish and blue catfish grow well in the lake, but conditions are not favorable for reproduction. Supplemental stockings have been conducted to maintain the population of blue catfish and channel catfish in Lake Claiborne.

Florida largemouth bass stockings on Lake Claiborne were initiated in 1999 in an effort to offer anglers a chance to catch a fish of greater average size. To date 805,686 Florida bass fingerlings have been stocked in Lake Claiborne. Genetic testing, conducted in 2010 indicates a 12% Florida bass genetic introgression. Anecdotal information indicates that benefits of the Florida bass stockings have not

been substantial. Few large bass have been reported by Lake Claiborne anglers since the stocking efforts began.

Table 6. The stocking history of Lake Claiborne from 1967 to 2011

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number / Species stocked</b>
1967	2,400 Striped bass fingerlings 30,000 Largemouth bass fingerlings 50,000 Channel catfish fingerlings 180,000 Bluegill fingerlings 20,000 Black Crappie fingerlings 3,000 Walleye fingerlings
1975	130,000 Striped bass fingerlings
1977	150,091 Striped bass fingerlings 1,800 Channel catfish fingerlings 16,200 Blue catfish fingerlings
1978	68,310 Striped bass fingerlings
1979	35,000 Striped bass fingerlings
1980	12,200 Catfish fingerlings
1981	87,445 Striped bass fingerlings 13,200 Blue catfish fingerlings
1982	71,146 Striped bass fingerlings 9,331 Blue catfish fingerlings
1983	70,000 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings
1984	71,325 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 3,900 Channel catfish fingerlings 12,959 Blue Catfish fingerlings
1985	36,000 Striped bass fingerlings 35,069 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings
1986	12,376 Channel catfish fingerlings
1987	9,913 Blue catfish fingerlings
1988	100,000 Channel catfish fingerlings (purchased by Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission)
1989	68,000 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings
1991	70,028 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings
1992	100,000 Channel catfish fingerlings (purchased by Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission)
1993	329,000 Hybrid striped bass fry
1995	191,000 Hybrid striped bass fry
1996	750,000 Hybrid striped bass fry
1999	68,215 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 3,229 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (phase II) 68,222 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 11,000 Channel catfish fingerlings 8,018 Blue catfish fingerlings

2000	64,575 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 3,380 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (phase II) 68,160 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 79,991 Channel catfish fingerlings
2001	4,501 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (phase II) 90,272 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings
2002	68,100 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 3,825 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (phase II) 70,624 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 68,000 Channel catfish fingerlings (purchased by Claiborne Parish Watershed Commission)
2003	68,208 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 69,393 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 12,470 Channel catfish fingerlings
2004	67,424 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (Reciprocal cross) 72,630 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 68,111 Channel catfish fingerlings
2005	62,851 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 68,008 Channel catfish fingerlings
2006	44,450 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings
2007	68,608 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 69,984 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 37,670 Channel catfish fingerlings
2008	68,000 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings
2009	92,818 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings 64,380 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 15,268 Channel catfish fingerlings
2010	68,191 Hybrid striped bass fingerlings (Reciprocal cross) 50,670 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings
2011	50,500 Florida largemouth bass fingerlings 6,480 Channel catfish fingerlings

Species Profile:

A list of freshwater fish species collected during standardized sampling efforts can be found in Table 7 below:

Table 7. List of indigenous freshwater fishes found in Lake Claiborne through LDWF standardized sampling efforts.

Gar Family, LEPISOSTEIDAE

Spotted gar, *Lepisosteus oculatus* (Winchell)

Bowfin Family, AMIIDAE

Bowfin, *Amia calva* Linnaeus

Herring Family, CLUPEIDAE

Gizzard shad, *Dorosoma cepedianum* (Lesueur)

Threadfin shad, *Dorosoma petenense* (Günther)

Minnow Family, CYPRINIDAE

Blacktail shiner, *Cyprinella venusta* (Girard)

Common carp, *Cyprinus carpio* Linnaeus

Redfin shiner, *Lythrurus umbratilis* (Girard)

Golden shiner, *Notemigonus crysoleucas* (Mitchill)

Pugnose minnow, *Notropis emiliae* Hay

Bullhead minnow, *Pimephales vigilax* (Baird and Girard)

Sucker Family, CATOSTOMIDAE

Lake chubsucker, *Erimyzon sucetta* (Lacépède)

Spotted sucker, *Minytrema melanops* (Rafinesque)

Freshwater Catfish Family, ICTALURIDAE

Black bullhead, *Ameiurus melas* (Rafinesque)

Yellow bullhead, *Ameiurus natalis* (Lesueur)

Blue catfish, *Ictalurus furcatus* (Lesueur)

Channel catfish, *Ictalurus punctatus* (Rafinesque)

Tadpole madtom, *Noturus gyrinus* (Mitchill)

Flathead catfish, *Pylodictis olivaris* (Rafinesque)

Pike Family, ESOCIDAE

Chain pickerel, *Esox niger* Lesueur

Pirate Perch Family, APHREDODERIDAE

Pirate perch, *Aphredoderus sayanus* (Gilliams)

Killifish Family, CYPRINODONTIDAE

Blackstripe topminnow, *Fundulus notatus* (Rafinesque)

Golden topminnow, *Fundulus chrysotus* (Günther)

Blackspotted topminnow, *Fundulus olivaceus* (Storer)

Livebearer Family, POECILIIDAE

Western mosquitofish, *Gambusia affinis* (Baird and Girard)

Silverside Family, ATHERINIDAE

Brook silverside, *Labidesthes sicculus* (Cope)

Temperate Bass Family, PERCICHTHYIDAE

Yellow bass, *Morone mississippiensis* Jordan and Eigenmann

Striped bass, *Morone saxatilis* (Walbaum) (may be extirpated)

Palmetto bass, *Morone saxatilis* X *Morone chrysops*

Sunfish Family, CENTRARCHIDAE

Flier, *Centrarchus macropterus* (Lacépède)

Banded pygmy sunfish, *Elassoma zonatum* Jordan

Green sunfish, *Lepomis cyanellus* Rafinesque

Warmouth, *Lepomis gulosus* (Cuvier)

Orangespotted sunfish, *Lepomis humilis* (Girard)

Bluegill, *Lepomis macrochirus* (Rafinesque)

Dollar sunfish, *Lepomis marginatus* (Holbrook)

Longear sunfish, *Lepomis megalotis* (Rafinesque)

Redear sunfish, *Lepomis microlophus* (Günther)

Redspotted sunfish, *Lepomis miniatus* Jordan

Spotted bass, *Micropterus punctulatus* (Rafinesque)

Florida largemouth bass, *Micropterus floridanus*  
(Kassler et al.)

Northern largemouth bass, *Micropterus salmoides*  
(Lacépède)

White crappie, *Pomoxis annularis* Rafinesque

Black crappie, *Pomoxis nigromaculatus* (Lesueur)

#### Perch Family, PERCIDAE

Mud darter, *Etheostoma asprigene* (Forbes)

Creole darter, *Etheostoma collettei* Birdsong and Knapp

Goldstripe darter, *Etheostoma parvipinne* Gilbert and Swain

Cypress darter, *Etheostoma proeliare* (Hay)

#### Largemouth Bass Genetics:

Genetic analysis of the largemouth bass population began in 1990 with sampling conducted every 2 to 5 years. The results are listed in Table 8. The most recent sample taken in 2010 indicates a Florida influence of 12%.

Table 8. – Largemouth bass genetic analysis from Lake Claiborne, LA, from 1990 to 2010.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Northern %</b>	<b>Florida %</b>	<b>Hybrid %</b>
1990	22	100	0	0
1993	24	92	0	8
1995	30	100	0	0
2000	54	98	2	0
2003	50	88	4	8
2005	53	85	0	15
2008	47	90	6	4
2010	124	88	0	12

#### Threatened/Endangered/Exotic Species:

No threatened or endangered fish species are known to inhabit Lake Claiborne.

#### **CREEL**

A creel survey was conducted on Lake Claiborne in 1989. The data collected during this sample was reported to be questionable by the Inland Fisheries Biologist Supervisor in District 1 at the time the survey was conducted. It was suspected that some of the LDWF personnel serving as creel clerks reported false information on the data sheets. The data collected had been retained in the Inland Fisheries files in District 1 but was never entered into the data management system due to the concern over inaccuracy.

## **HYDROLOGICAL CHANGES**

No changes since impoundment in 1966.

## **WATER USE**

Fishing, recreational boating, waterskiing, swimming, and waterfowl hunting.

## **HUNTING**

Waterfowl hunting is locally popular on Lake Claiborne.

**APPENDIX I – Claiborne Parish Watershed District - Enabling Legislation**  
([Return to Authorization](#))

**RS 38:2861 – 2878**

**PART IX. CLAIBORNE PARISH WATERSHED DISTRICT**

**§2861. Creation; location**

The Claiborne Parish Watershed District is hereby created out of the watershed of all streams located in Claiborne Parish, and more particularly defined as all of Claiborne Parish, Louisiana.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §1.

**§2862. District as political subdivision and budgetary unit; purpose:**

The Claiborne Parish Watershed District shall be a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana and a budgetary unit of the state of Louisiana, which shall have as its purpose the conservation of soil and water, including surface and groundwater, and developing the natural resources and wealth of the district for sanitary, agricultural, industrial, and recreational purposes, as the same may be conducive to the public health, safety, convenience, or welfare or of public utility or benefit. The creation and maintenance of Lake Claiborne within the district shall be for the purpose of conserving the soil and water, including surface and groundwater, and developing the natural resources and wealth of the district for sanitary, agricultural, industrial, and recreational purposes, as the same may be conducive to the public health and public utility and benefit.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §2; Acts 2004, No. 390, §1.

**2863. Body corporate; powers:**

The Claiborne Parish Watershed District shall constitute a body corporate in law, with all the powers of a corporation, and with all the powers and rights of a political subdivision of the state as provided by the laws of the state relating to the incurring of debt and the issuing of bonds therefor. Said district, through its board of commissioners, may incur debt and issue negotiable bonds in accordance with the power and authority and in the form and manner, and with the effect and security now or hereafter provided by the constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana. This district, through its board of commissioners, may incur debt and contract obligations in accordance with law, sue and be sued, have a corporate seal, and do and perform any and all acts in its corporate capacity and in its corporate name which are necessary and proper for carrying out the purposes and objects for which it is created. It shall have the power of eminent domain and may expropriate property for all its purposes and objectives, in accordance with the constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana. Through its governing authority, the district may conserve the fresh water supply within its boundaries for the benefit of the inhabitants and property owners within said district and state, to provide water for



commercial, municipal and any other uses, both within and without the district. It may construct, lease, maintain, acquire, enlarge and operate any machinery or do any other thing necessary for the use and purpose of the district. It may own in full ownership all servitudes, rights of way, flowage rights and may acquire same by donation, prescription, purchase, expropriation, or otherwise.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §3.

§2864. Transfer of property

The State Bond and Building Commission is hereby authorized and directed to transfer, convey and assign to the Claiborne Parish Watershed District all of the rights, titles and interest of the State Bond and Building Commission for the State of Louisiana in all fee titles, servitudes and flowage rights acquired as a part of the Lake Claiborne project.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §4.

§2865. Board of commissioners created

The Board of Commissioners of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District, with its powers and duties as defined herein, is hereby created and established as the governing authority of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §5.

§2866. Board to govern; membership; tenure; vacancies; compensation

A. The district shall be governed and controlled by the board of commissioners of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District. The board shall be composed of seven commissioners, each of whom shall be a qualified elector of the state of Louisiana and reside within the boundaries of Claiborne Parish. The membership of the board shall be representative of the various geographical areas of the district, and members shall possess additional qualifications as follows:

(1) Be dedicated to district purposes of conserving the district's soil and water, including surface and groundwater, and developing its natural resources and wealth for present and future citizens of Claiborne Parish.

(2) Be very knowledgeable of and have extensive experience in the production of water and system management or in another field of work pertinent to the purposes of the district.

(3) Be dedicated to the team approach of goal setting and problem solving.

(4) Be willing to volunteer time and effort as needed to accomplish district objectives.

B. (1) The commissioners shall be appointed by the Claiborne Parish Police Jury and shall serve terms of four years and until their successors have been appointed and have qualified; except that one of the initial appointments shall be for a term of one year, two shall be for a term of two years, two shall be for a term of three years, and two shall be for a term of four years.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, no person shall serve more than two consecutive terms. However, if a person has been appointed to fill less than one-half of an unexpired term, such person may serve two consecutive terms in

addition to such partial term. If a person has been appointed to fill more than one-half of an unexpired term, such person shall be eligible to serve consecutively no more than one full term in addition to such partial term. At the conclusion of such service, a board member who becomes subject to these limitations shall not serve on the board for four years. Upon the expiration of four years, such member shall be eligible to serve again, subject to the same limitations.

C. Any vacancy in the office of commissioner, due to death, resignation, or any other cause, shall be filled by an appointment of the Claiborne Parish Police Jury.

D. The members of the board shall receive no compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for expenses actually incurred in the performance of official duties.

E. Any member of the board may be removed for cause. Grounds for removal shall include but not be limited to conduct having a material adverse affect upon the work of the district or conviction of a felony. A written recommendation of removal, approved by a majority of the membership of the board, shall be submitted to the police jury of Claiborne Parish. The police jury shall send notice of recommendation of removal to such board member, which notice shall set forth the charges against him. Unless within ten days from receipt of such notice such board member files a written request for a hearing before the police jury, the board member shall be deemed removed from office.

If a request for hearing is so filed, the police jury shall hold a hearing not sooner than ten days subsequent to the date a hearing is requested, at which the board members shall determine whether the removal shall be upheld. Removal of such member shall be by majority vote of the membership of the police jury. If removal is not upheld, the board member shall continue to hold his office.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §6; Acts 2004, No. 390, §1.

#### §2867. Oaths

Before entering upon his official duties, each commissioner of the district created hereby shall take and subscribe to an oath before an officer authorized by law to administer oaths, that he will honestly, faithfully and impartially perform the duties devolving upon him as a commissioner of said district and that he will not neglect any of the duties imposed upon him thereby. The oaths of the commissioner shall be recorded in the oath book of Claiborne Parish.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §7.

#### §2868. Election of officers; record book, public inspection

A. Immediately after the commissioners have been appointed by the Claiborne Parish Police Jury, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the commissioners shall meet and immediately organize by electing officers. They shall elect from their membership a president who shall preside over the meetings of the board, perform such duties as are usually required of presidents of corporate bodies, and such other duties as are fixed by the bylaws adopted by the board. The commissioners shall also elect from their membership a vice president who shall perform the duties of the president in case of his absence or disability.

B. The board shall cause to be kept a well-bound book entitled "Record Book of Claiborne Parish Watershed District", in which shall be recorded the minutes of all meetings, all proceedings, certificates, oaths of commissioners, bonds of employees and contractors, and any and all corporate acts. The records shall be in the possession of the secretary of the board and shall be open to public inspection at all times by any person interested.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §8; Acts 2004, No. 390, §1.

§2869. Powers of board

A. In order to accomplish the purposes for which the district is created, the board of commissioners may:

(1) Purchase, hold, sell, and convey land and personal property and execute such contracts as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it properly to carry out the purposes for which it is created.

(2) Acquire servitudes, rights-of-way, and flowage rights, by purchase, by expropriation, and by assignment, in accordance with the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana.

(3) Assist in conserving soil and water and in developing the water resources of the district. The board may cooperate with conservation districts, including soil and water conservation districts, lake districts, or other watershed districts in order to accomplish these objectives. However, nothing shall be done to interfere with districts previously organized under Louisiana law.

(4) Construct, maintain, and improve any works or improvements for the control, retention, diversion, or utilization of water and cooperate with the state Department of Transportation and Development and other state agencies in accomplishing such objectives.

(5) Acquire personal property by gift or purchase.

(6) Employ and hire a secretary and such other personnel as may be necessary in the operation of the business of the district and fix their compensation, and the board is further authorized to employ engineers, attorneys, and other professional personnel as necessary and fix their compensation.

(7) Levy taxes, issue bonds, and incur indebtedness within the limitations prescribed by the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana and in the manner prescribed thereby.

(8) Cooperate and contract with persons, firms, associations, partnerships, private corporations, political subdivisions of this state, or other public corporations and with any other local, state, and governmental agencies for the sale or use of any waters impounded by the district.

(9) Select a domicile and home office for the district.

(10) Do and perform any and all things necessary or incident to the fulfillment of the purposes for which this district is created, including all acts necessary to construct, lease, acquire in any manner, maintain, and operate dikes, dams, reservoirs, storage basins, locks, levees, flumes, conduits, spillways, or other structures necessary, suitable, or convenient to the purposes of the district.

(11) Appropriate money and provide for the expenses of the district.

(12) Make all police regulations necessary for the preservation of good order and the peace of the district, and to prevent injury to, destruction of, or interference with public or private property.

(13) Secure the general health of the district. In order to secure the general health of the district, the board of commissioners may:

(a) Prevent, remove, and abate nuisances.

(b) Prohibit the construction of privy vaults and cesspools and regulate or suppress those already constructed.

(c) Compel and regulate the connection of all property with the sewers and drains.

(d) Establish health and sanitary regulations, not in conflict with the state's Sanitary Code, and enforce such regulations with regard to construction within the district.

(e) Compel and regulate the removal of garbage and filth within the limits of the district.

(14) Grant franchises to telephone, telegraph, cable, and electric power companies and grant franchises for the purposes of constructing gas, sewer, electricity, or other utility lines and facilities to supply the inhabitants or any person or corporation with gas, water, sewerage, and electricity, when such construction is within the district. The provisions of this Paragraph shall not impair the rights granted to public utilities pursuant to the provisions of R.S. 45:781.

(15) Appoint, hire, fix the compensation of, designate, and empower wardens, rangers, patrols, and such other personnel as may be deemed necessary by the board for the enforcement of such regulations as it may promulgate and adopt.

B. The Claiborne Parish Watershed District shall not be deemed to be an instrumentality of the state for purposes of Article X, Section 1(A) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

C. The board of commissioners of the district shall have the care, management, and control of the lake or reservoir formed by the damming of Bayou D'Arbonne and its property and finances.

D. The district may raise funds by taxes or otherwise to be expended by and under the direction of the board of commissioners.

E. The district, through the board of commissioners, is authorized to incur debt and issue negotiable bonds for the construction of works of public improvement and for such other public purposes as may be necessary and proper to effect the purpose of the district; and to that effect, the district, through the board, is authorized to call any special elections that are necessary to levy taxes, incur debt, or to issue and sell negotiable bonds, all in conformity with the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana.

F. The board of commissioners shall have, with respect to the improvements and maintenance of the district, the advice of the Department of Transportation and Development. It may request from time to time the assistance of the department to make such surveys, inspections, and investigations; render such reports, estimates, and recommendations; and furnish such plans and specifications or other engineering services as it may request, and the department shall provide such assistance. The board may further cooperate with the department in the construction of any work or facility the board considers necessary to achieve the purposes of the district.

G. For the purpose of providing funds to carry out the objects and purposes of the district, the board may levy and collect an ad valorem tax on all taxable property in the district subject to applicable provisions of law. Such tax shall be levied by resolution of the board only after the question of its levy has been approved by a majority of the registered voters of the district voting at an election held for that purpose in accordance with the Louisiana Election Code. The proposition submitted to the voters shall state the amount and duration of the tax.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §9; Acts 1993, No. 830, §2; Acts 2004, No. 390, §§1, 2; Acts 2005, No. 81, §1.

#### §2870. Rules and regulations

A. In order to accomplish the purposes of the district, to protect the works, improvements, and property of the district, both real and personal; to secure the best results from the construction, operation, and maintenance thereof, and to prevent damage to the district by misuse of any works, improvements, or properties or by the pollution or misuse of the waters of the district or any water course therein, the board of commissioners may make and enforce such rules and regulations as it shall deem necessary and advisable as follows:

(1) To protect and preserve the works, improvements, and properties owned or controlled by the district, prescribe the manner of their use by public corporations and persons, and preserve order within and adjacent thereto.

(2) To prescribe the manner of building bridges, roads, or fences, or other works in, along, or across any channel, reservoir, or other construction of the district.

(3) To prescribe the manner in which ditches, sewers, pipelines, or other works shall be adjusted to or connected with the works of the district or any water course therein and the manner in which the water courses of the district may be used for sewer outlets or for disposal of waste.

(4) To prescribe the permissible uses of the water supply, provided by the impoundments constructed, and to prevent the pollution or unnecessary waste of such water supply.

(5) To prohibit or regulate the discharge into sewers of the district of any liquid or solid waste deemed detrimental to the works and improvements of the district.

(6) To establish rules and regulations and cause them to be enforced with regard to activities engaged in upon any public water body in the district which are not regulated by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission or the United States Army Corp of Engineers.

(7) To manage and control surface and groundwater levels in the district. Any rule or regulation pertaining to the management and control of groundwater levels in the district shall be subject to approval by the Groundwater Resources Commission.

B. Any person who violates the rules and regulations established and promulgated by the board of commissioners pursuant to this Section shall be fined not less than five hundred dollars or more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned for more than sixty days, or both. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §10; Acts 1993, No. 830, §2; Acts 2004, No. 390, §1; Acts 2005, No. 81, §1.

§2871. Constructions which would impede flow of water in watershed prohibited; pollution defined and prohibited; penalties fixed for violations

(A) No person or public corporation shall erect within the drainage area of the district any dam or reservoir upon any stream or water course which will affect Lake Claiborne until a copy of the plans thereof has been filed with the board of commissioners for approval.

Whoever violates this Subsection shall be fined not less than five hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned for not less than thirty days, nor more than sixty days, or both.

(B) No person shall knowingly and willfully empty or drain into, or permit to be drained from any pumps, reservoirs, wells or oil fields into any stream or drain constituting the Lake Claiborne watershed or from any stream within said district into the said reservoir any oil, salt water or other noxious or poisonous gases or substances which would render the water unfit for irrigation purposes or would destroy aquatic and fish life in the streams.

Whoever violates this Subsection shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than two hundred dollars or imprisoned for not less than thirty days nor more than three months.

Each and every day that oil, salt water, or other substances are permitted to flow into natural streams or drains which constitute the watershed of Lake Claiborne shall constitute a separate and distinct offense.

(C) No person shall:

(1) Obstruct drainage channels which compose any drain or stream flowing into Lake Claiborne by bridging them except in accordance with plans, specifications and instructions prescribed by the Board of Commissioners of the said Claiborne Parish Watershed District.

(2) Construct dams, locks, or gates in drainage channels of the said Lake Claiborne watershed without permission of the commission.

(3) Extend fences of wire or any other material across drainage channels into and forming a part of the watershed of Lake Claiborne.

(4) Anchor rafts, crafts, fish traps, fish cars and other obstacles in the channel of any stream, drain or natural flow of the feeder streams of the Lake Claiborne watershed.

(5) Drain into channels by natural or artificial inlets except under regulations prescribed by the Board of Commissioners of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District.

(6) Float timber in the watershed of Lake Claiborne.

(7) Use the channels for transportation or navigation except under authority of an agreement with the Board of Commissioners of Claiborne Parish Watershed District.

(8) In any manner obstruct drainage channels, natural flow drains or natural flowage or violate any of the rules or regulations adopted and promulgated by the Board of Commissioners of Claiborne Parish Watershed District for preserving and maintaining the efficiency of the drainage channels in said district.

Whoever violates this Subsection shall be fined not less than two hundred and fifty dollars or more than five hundred dollars or be imprisoned for not less than thirty days or more than sixty days or both.

(D) No proprietor, owner, lessee, or possessor of land abutting upon the Lake Claiborne reservoir or upon any public road paralleling the water line or contiguous to the said Lake Claiborne reservoir shall in any manner close or place any obstruction in the drains or ditches, whether on private property or on the public road or levee adjacent to the road which will in any manner interfere with the effective, thorough and continuous drainage into the said reservoir.

Whoever violates this Subsection shall be fined not less than two hundred and fifty dollars or more than five hundred dollars or be imprisoned for not less than thirty days or more than sixty days, or both.

The sheriff of the parish, in addition to his other duties, is charged with the responsibility of aiding and assisting the commission in the enforcement of all rules and regulations adopted in accordance herewith.

(E) The district attorney of the judicial district within which the said watershed district is situated is hereby designated as the proper official and charged with the responsibility of the prosecution of all violations of the rules and regulations adopted by the said commission in pursuance hereto.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §11.

§2872. Contracts of the district

Contracts of the district shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 10 of this Title, relative to public contracts (R.S. 38:2181 et seq.).

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §12; Acts 2005, No. 81, §1.

§2873. Playgrounds, parks and other facilities; limitation

The board of commissioners shall have the power to cause to be created and constructed playgrounds, picnic grounds, grounds for recreation parks, and any and all other facilities to accommodate the public and to provide adequate access to the said lake, as may within the opinion of the said board become necessary, and said district shall have the right of eminent domain and expropriation in the exercise of such powers.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §13.

§2874. Management of fish; commercial establishments

A. The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission may regulate, restrict, or prohibit the recreational or commercial use of hoop nets, gill nets, trammel nets, strike nets, seines, wire nets, slat traps, and wire traps on Lake Claiborne.

B.(1) The board of commissioners of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District shall have authority to establish and cause to be enforced rules and regulations pertaining to all commercial establishments which may be constructed for the purpose of commercializing and making commercial use of the facilities provided by the said lake or its watershed; to license and permit such establishments and to levy and collect a fee, to be fixed by the commission, for the privilege of making commercial use of the facilities

of said lake, or to refuse to license or permit any commercial establishment to use the facilities provided by said lake.

(2) The rules and regulations established and promulgated by the board of commissioners of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District shall provide penalties for any such commercial establishment operating without a permit or license, and such rules and regulations shall be enforced by the sheriff and violations thereof prosecuted by the district attorney of the judicial district within which the watershed district is situated, as hereinabove provided.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §14; Acts 1993, No. 830, §2; Acts 2004, No. 541, §1.

#### §2875. Management of improvements

The board of commissioners shall have the right to regulate the construction and use of all piers, docks, bridges and other improvements built or erected on any part of the district to be inundated by Lake Claiborne and shall further have the right to regulate and control the erection of any improvements of any kind whatever within one mile from the 185.0 foot contour shoreline of Lake Claiborne. The board of commissioners shall have the authority and power to regulate said improvements by the issuance of permits for same and fix a fee for the issuance of same.

The board of commissioners is authorized to charge an annual fee for the permit to maintain improvements on or within one mile of the shores of Lake Claiborne.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §15.

#### §2876. Property exempt from taxation

The lands which lie within and form the Lake Claiborne proper shall not be subject to any ad valorem taxation or any other tax of any nature whatsoever by either the State of Louisiana or any of its political subdivisions, for so long as the said lands shall form and lie within the lake proper. All property acquired, however, regardless of the manner in which it is acquired or the source from which it is acquired, shall thereafter become the property of the State of Louisiana for the use and benefit of the Claiborne Parish Watershed District.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §16.

#### §2877. Grant of state lands to district; right of mineral leases unabridged

All lands purchased by the State Bond and Building Commission for the State of Louisiana, which are enclosed in the said area and which are necessary to the erection and maintenance of said Lake Claiborne are hereby granted to the Lake Claiborne Watershed District, as provided in R.S. 38:2864, for the purposes herein set out, but this grant shall in no wise abridge the right of the state to lease the said land for the production of oil, gas and other minerals under the general laws of the state as now provided.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §17.



§2878. Individual mineral leases unabridged

The provisions of this Part shall in no wise abridge the right of any individual from whom the flowage rights, rights of way and servitudes may have been acquired by any means however to lease said lands for the production of oil, gas and other minerals and the right of such lessee or his assignee to produce or cause to be produced oil, gas or other minerals therefrom.

Added by Acts 1966, No. 299, §18.

## APPENDIX II – Lake Claiborne Public Boat Ramps

[\(return to Boat Ramps\)](#)



**APPENDIX III – Aquatic Vegetation Type Maps and Narratives**  
([Return to Aquatic vegetation](#))

Lake Claiborne – Aquatic Vegetation Type Map and Narrative - 1982

Lake Claiborne  
1982

At the time of assessment Lake Claiborne was approximately four (4) feet below pool stage. The color of the water was clear with a light plankton bloom.

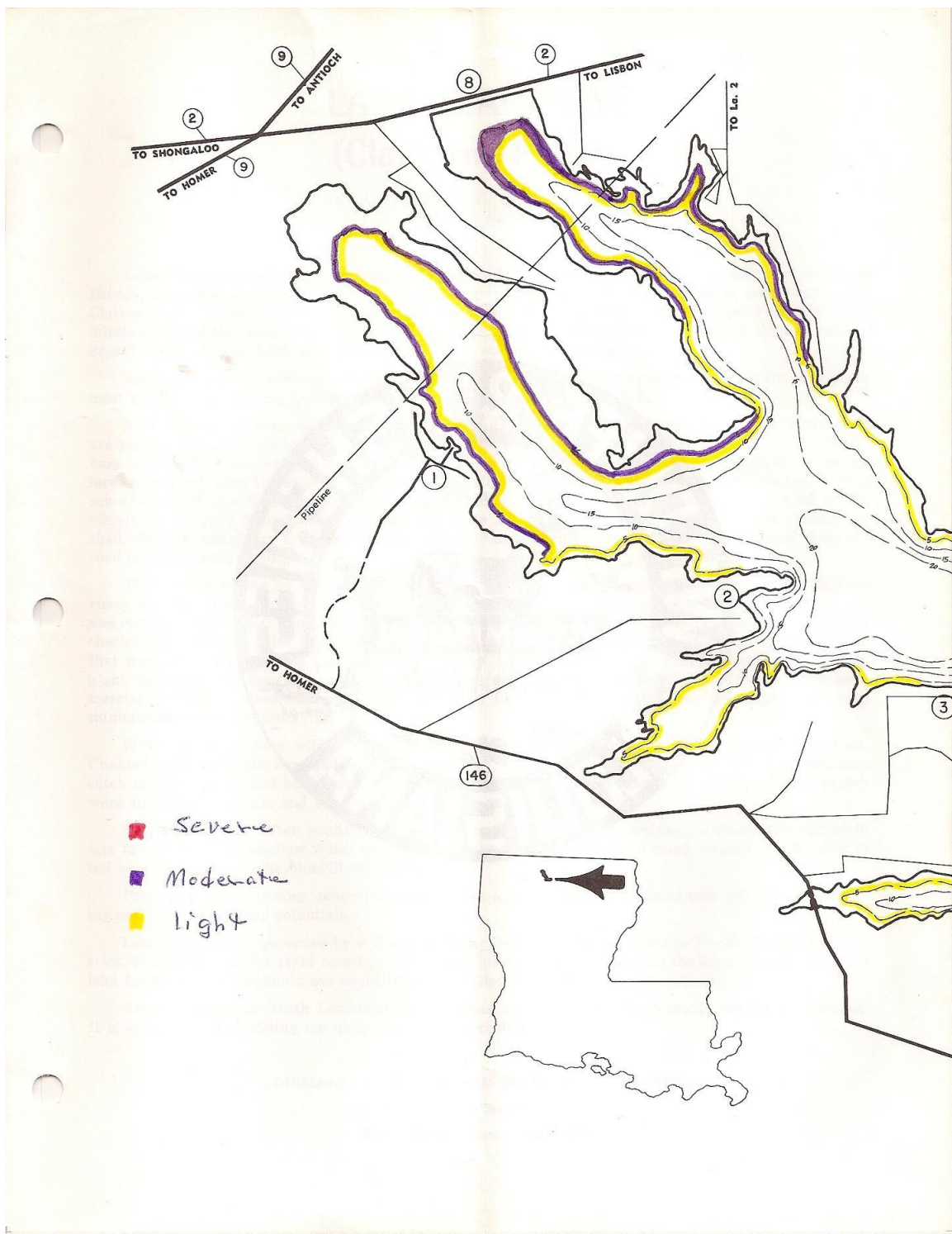
Lake Claiborne has been below normal pool stage since the last drawdown because of the small watershed and drought conditions.

The marginal plants noted were saltbush (*Baccharis spp.*), bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*), sedge (*Cyperus spp.*) and smartweed (*Polygonum spp.*). The submersed plants noted were fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*), bladderwort (*Utricularia spp.*), coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), Brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*), and eel-grass (*Vallisneria americana*).

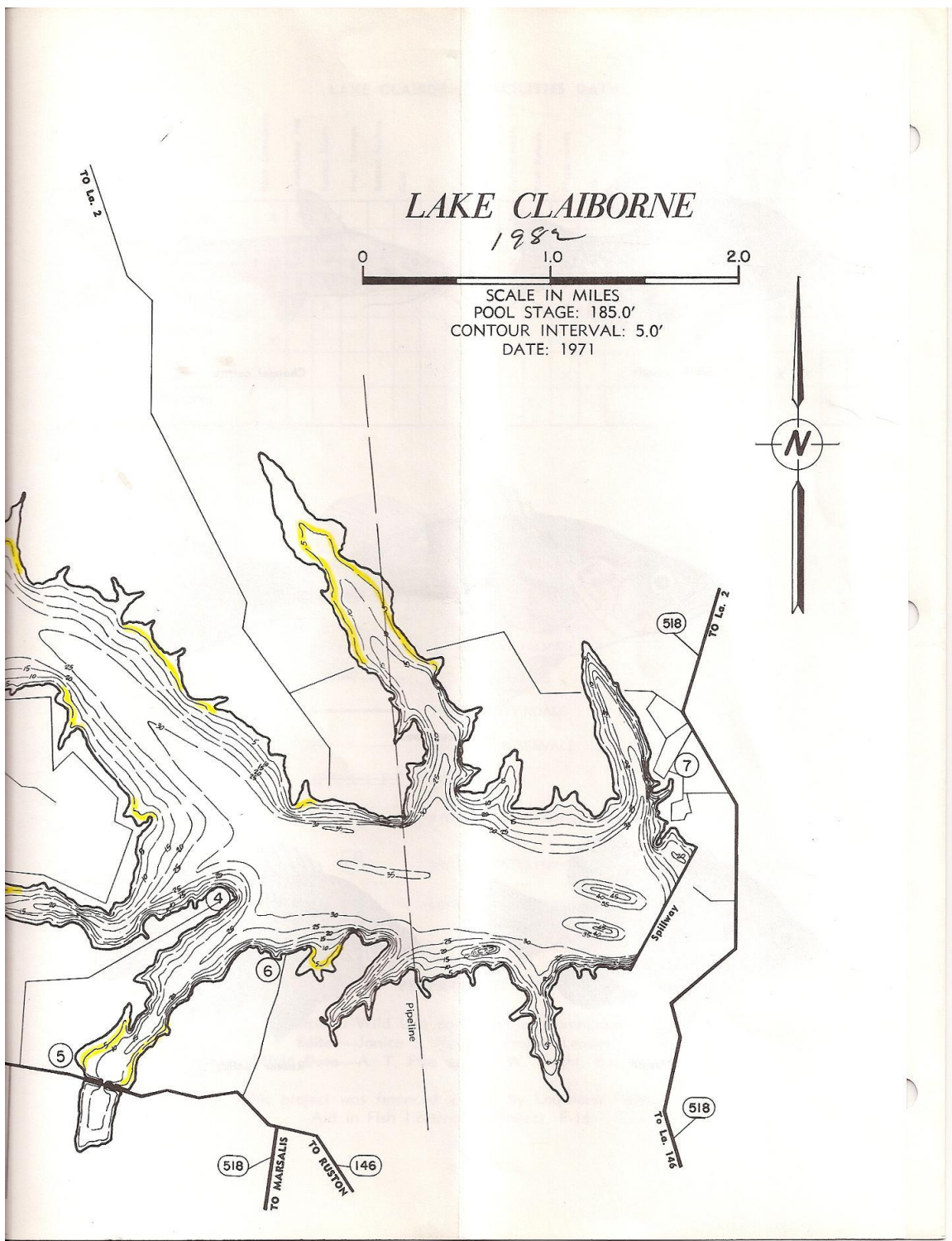
Most submersed infestations were light but some moderate infestations were found in the upper end. The lower end had little to no plants at all.

The low water level has caused a dramatic increase in marginal plants.

Above text transcribed from original document presumably written by Melvin Bagwell; edited and corrected by James Seales, August 2012.







## Lake Claiborne – Aquatic Vegetation Type Map and Narrative – 1988

### Lake Claiborne 1988

At the time of assessment Lake Claiborne was ten to twelve inches below pool stage. The color of the water was good. A plankton bloom was present in most all areas. It is likely that Lake Claiborne has not yet returned to pool stage following the drawdown in 1987 due to the drought earlier this year.

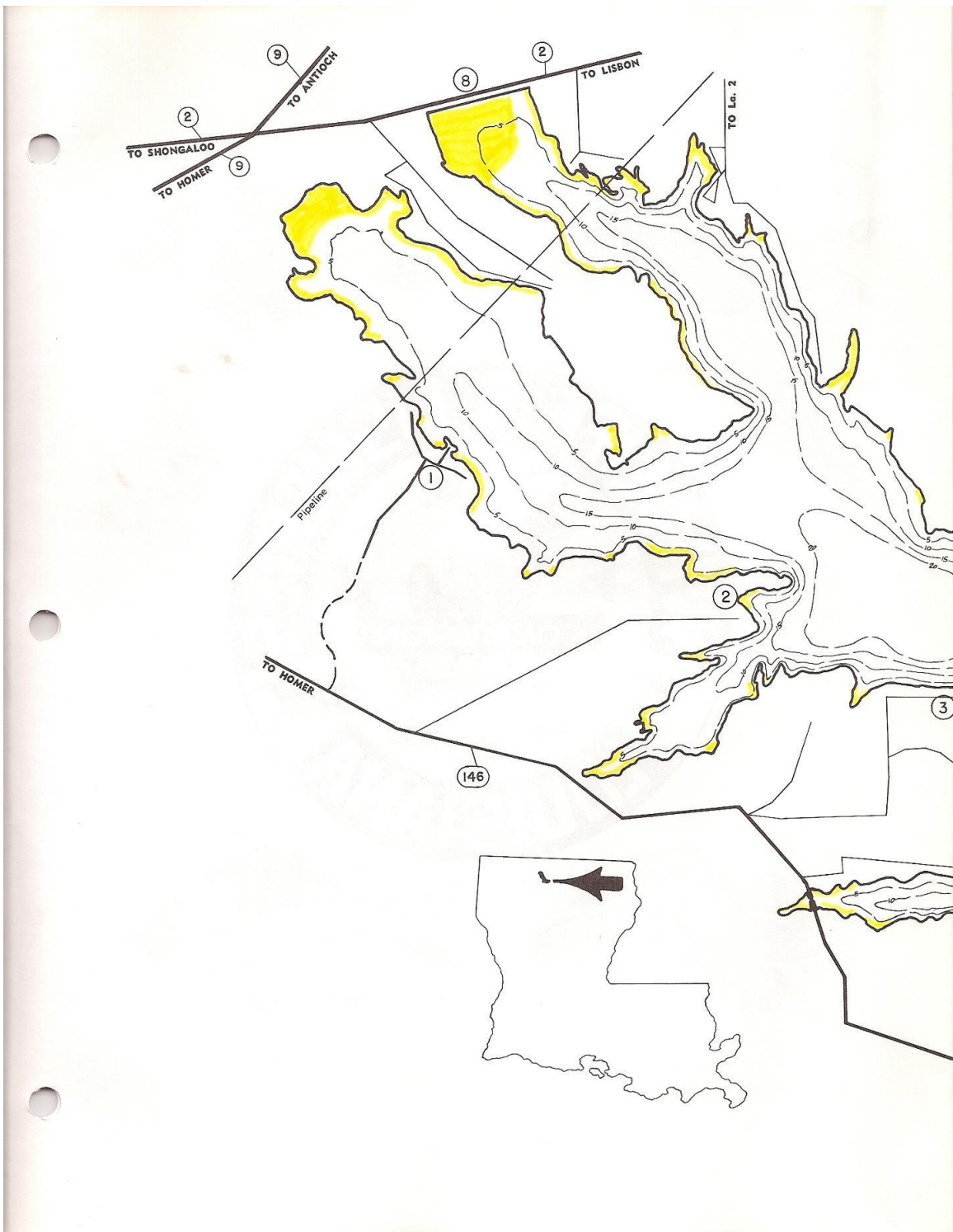
The submerged aquatic plants noted were; bladderwort (*Utricularia* spp.), fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*), southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*), and coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*).

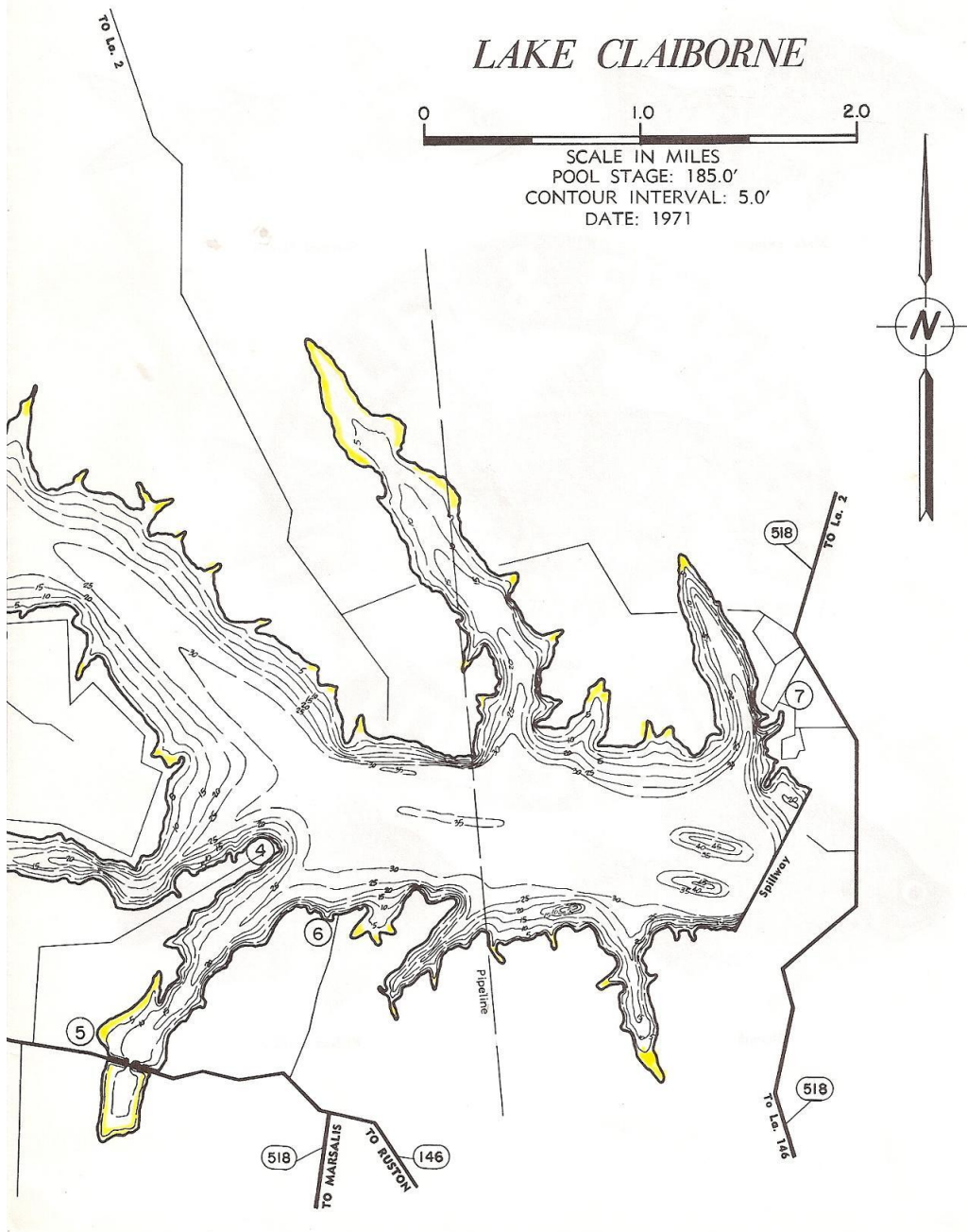
The emergent plants noted were fragrant water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*).

In summary, Lake Claiborne is in good condition. Lake Claiborne underwent a drawdown in the fall / winter of 1987. The drawdown has decreased some of the submersed plants significantly.

The light coverage in the upper end of the lake were composed of primarily of bladderwort (*Utricularia* spp.), along with some fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) and coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*). The light coverage in other areas was composed of bladderwort (*Utricularia* spp.) and southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*).

Above text transcribed from original document presumably written by Melvin Bagwell; edited and corrected by James Seales, August 2012.







## Lake Claiborne – Aquatic Vegetation Type Map and Narrative – 1994

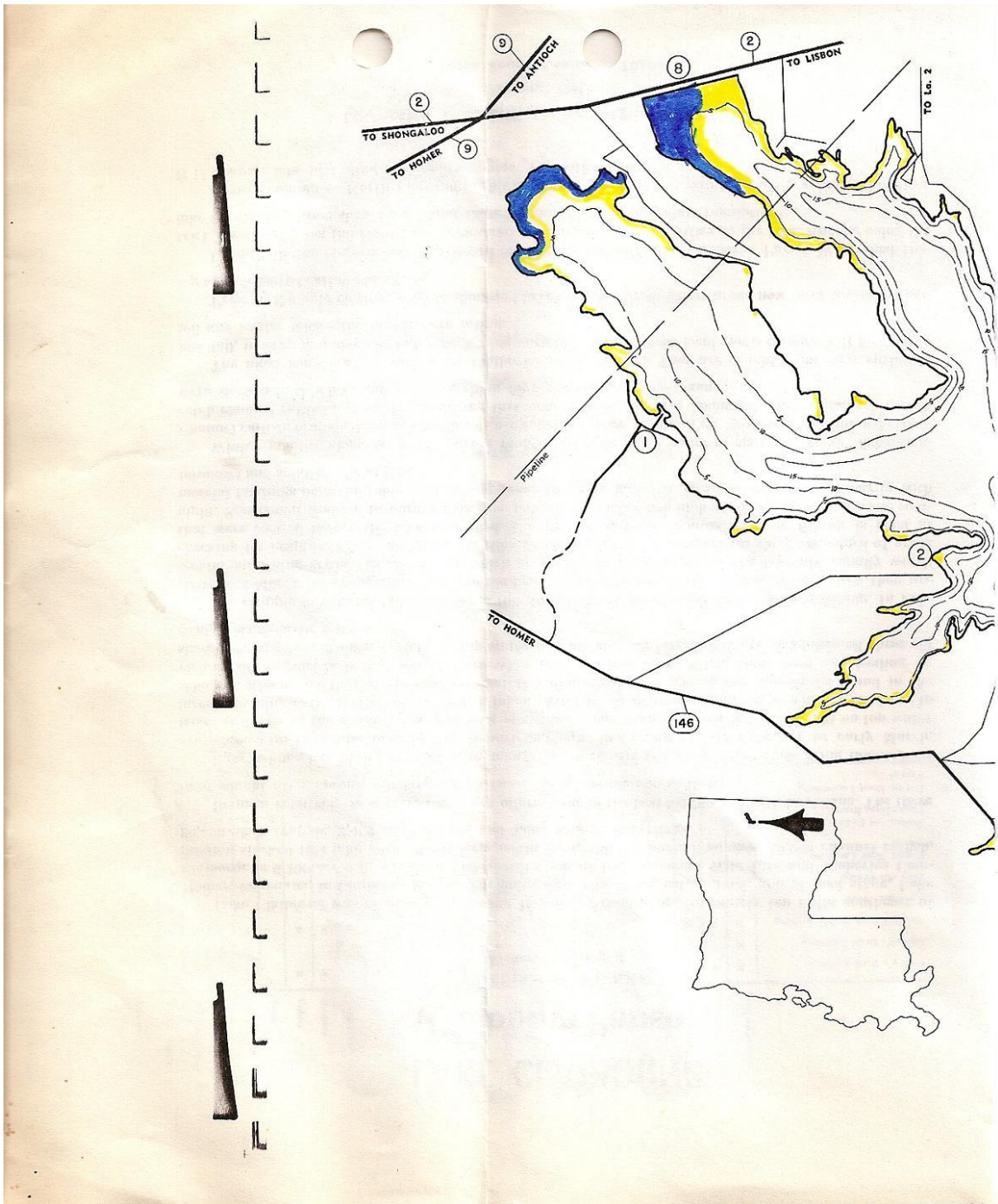
### Lake Claiborne 1994

At the time of the assessment Lake Claiborne was at pool stage. The water color was green stained. The secchi disc reading was 50 inches.

The submersed aquatic plants noted were fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*), bladderwort (*Utricularia spp.*), coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), pondweed (*Potamogeton spp.*), southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*), muskgrass (*Chara spp.*) and filamentous algae.

The submersed aquatic plants in Lake Claiborne ranged from light coverage in the lower and middle portions of the lake to light coverage to moderate coverage in the upper end of the lake. Coverage of submersed aquatic plants extended to depths of approximately 5 feet.

Above text transcribed from original document presumably written by Melvin Bagwell; edited and corrected by James Seales, August 2012.





Lake Claiborne – Aquatic Vegetation Type Map and Narrative – 2001

**LAKE CLAIBORNE**

October 2001

Melvin Bagwell

Lake Claiborne was surveyed for the presence of aquatic vegetation on October 3, 2001. At the time of the survey the lake was at pool stage. The water color was slightly turbid.

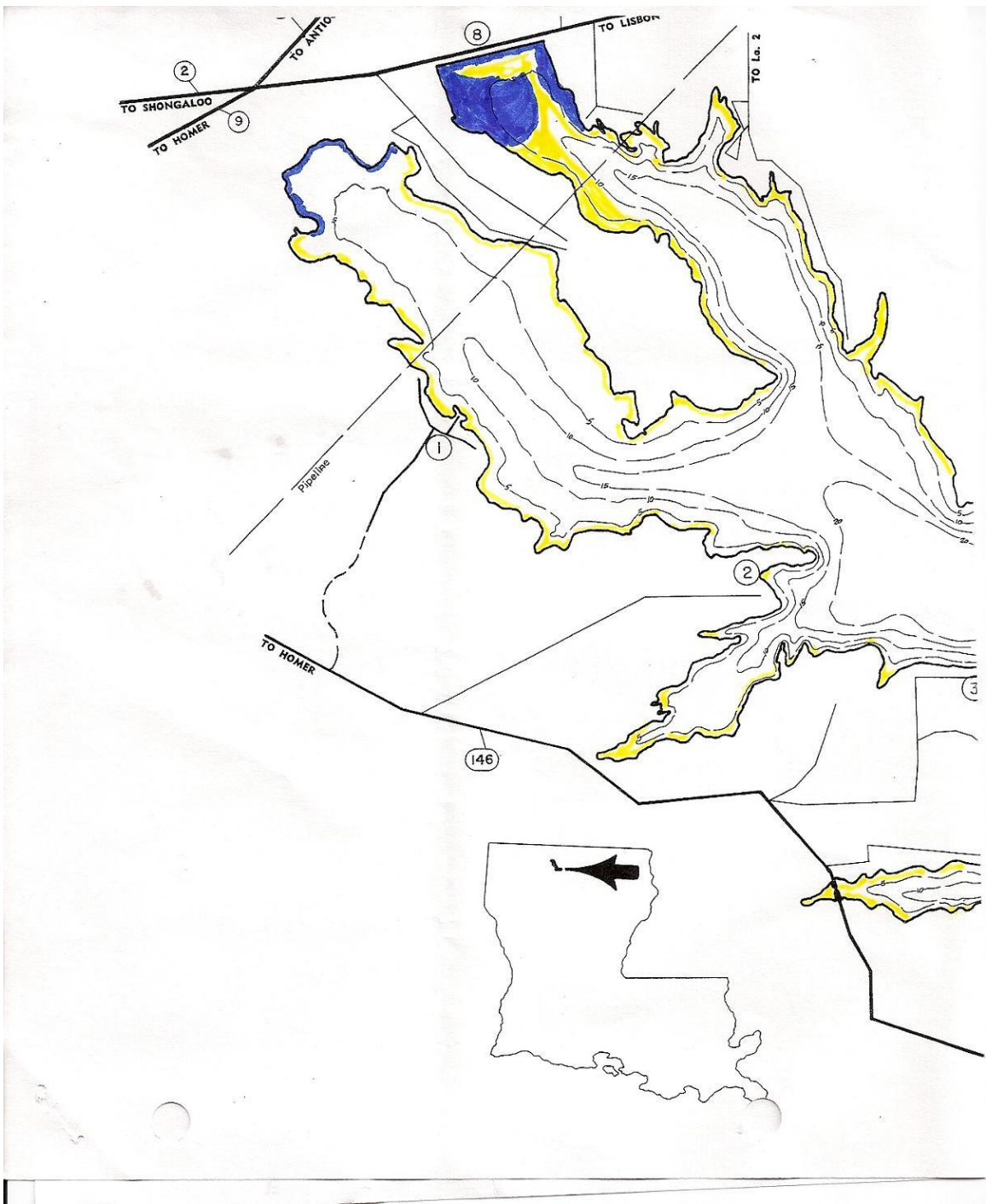
The submersed plant noted were: muskgrass (*Chara spp.*), filamentous algae, coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), southern naiad (*Najas guadalupensis*), and spikerush (*Eleocharis spp.*).

The emersed plants noted were bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*), smartweed (*Polygonum spp.*) and water primrose (*Ludwigia octovalvis*).

The estimated percent coverage of submersed plants was 5%.

Above text written by Melvin Bagwell; edited and corrected by James Seales, August 2012.





10-3-01

